

CLAIMS:

1. A nightlight and control unit comprising:

a nightlight housing including an illumination member;

a control unit associated with the nightlight housing for
5 regulating light in a light device connectable to the control unit;
and

input means for programming the control unit.

2. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
10 wherein the housing comprises a dome shaped cover mounted on a flat
base, the base having legs, the dome shaped cover and base defining
a chamber in which the illumination member is accommodated.

3. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
15 wherein the control unit is located within the housing.

4. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
wherein the control unit is outside of the housing and electrically
connected thereto.

5. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 4
wherein the control unit comprises a box containing circuitry for
regulating light in the light device, a light device connector
means for electrically connecting the light device with the control
25 unit, a nightlight connecting means for connecting the control unit

with the nightlight, and a power cable for connecting the control unit to a power source.

6. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
5 wherein the input means is located on the nightlight housing.

7. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
wherein the input means comprises time-setting means, whereby the control unit is programmed to regulate the light device so that the
10 light therefrom fades to off over a preselected time period.

8. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 7
wherein the time-setting means comprises an annular, rotatable ring member formed on the housing, the annular rotatable ring member
15 being slidable between a first position wherein the light on the light device is regulated to fade over a shorter period of time, and a second position wherein light from the light device is regulated to fade over a longer period of time.

20 9. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 7
wherein the time-setting means comprises a rotatable knob formed on the housing.

10. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 7
25 wherein the time-setting means comprises a plurality of buttons on

the surface of the housing, each button representing a time period over which the light from the light device is regulated to fade to off.

5 11. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 10 comprising four buttons, each button regulating the light device to fade over a different time period.

10 12. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 11 wherein the four buttons comprise a first button representing 15 minutes, a second button representing 30 minutes, a third button representing 45 minutes, and a fourth button representing 60 minutes, for regulating the light device to fade to off.

15 13. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a timer display for indicating time remaining for regulating the light in the light device.

20 14. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 13 wherein the timer display is comprised of a LED.

 15. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 13 wherein the timer display is comprised of a LCD.

25 16. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1

wherein the illumination member is an incandescent bulb.

17. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
wherein the illumination member is at least one light emitting
5 diode (LED).

18. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
further comprising adjustment means for adjusting the intensity of
the illumination member.

10 19. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
further comprising an on/off switch for the illumination member.

20. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 19
15 wherein the on/off switch is electronically operated by an ambient
light detector so that the illumination member will become
illuminated when ambient light conditions drop below a preset
level.

20 21. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 2
wherein the dome shaped cover is comprised of a fully or partially
translucent material to permit light from the illumination member
therein to be transmitted through the dome cover.

25 22. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1

wherein the housing includes a translucent window through which light from the illumination member can pass.

23. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 22
5 wherein the window is formed in a base portion of the housing.

24. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
wherein the control unit regulates light from a plurality of light
devices.

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25. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 24
wherein the control unit can regulate light in the plurality of
light devices so as to fade to off over a different period of time
for each light device.

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26. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 25
further comprising a selector switch for selecting separately each
one of the plurality of light devices for programming.

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27. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 21
wherein the housing is configured in the shape selected from the
group consisting of a turtle, a toy animal, a toy structure.

28. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 7
25 further comprising an adjustment means for setting the initial

light intensity of the light device prior to initiation of the fading out process.

29. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1
5 wherein the input means comprises a remote control transmitter unit, the control unit having receiving means for receiving signals from the remote control transmitter unit for programing the control unit.

10 30. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1 wherein the input means further comprises a remote control transmitter unit, the control unit having receiving means for receiving signals from the remote control transmitter unit for programming the control unit.

15 31. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 1 wherein:

the housing comprises a dome shaped cover spring mounted on a base member,

20 a plunger is formed inside the dome shaped cover,

a switch mechanism connects to the control unit, the switch mechanism being activated by the plunger when the dome shaped cover is pushed against the bias of the spring mounting, a first push of the plunger causing the light device to switch on and a second push
25 of the plunger causing the predetermined dimming sequence to begin.

32. A nightlight and control unit as claimed in claim 31 wherein a third push of the plunger causes the light device to switch off.